

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 277

September 5, 1996, 8:43 pm
Page S-9956 Temp. Record

COMMENDING U.S. FORCES IN IRAQI OPERATION/Passage

SUBJECT: A resolution commending U.S. Armed Forces responding to Iraqi aggression . . . S. Res. 288. Passage.

ACTION: RESOLUTION AGREED TO, 96-1

SYNOPSIS: S. Res. 288, a resolution commending U.S. Armed Forces responding to Iraqi aggression, resolves that "The Senate commends the military actions taken by and the performance of the United States Armed Forces, under the direction of the Commander in Chief, for carrying out this military mission in a highly professional, efficient, and effective manner." The resolution recognizes that on August 31, 1996, Saddam Hussein, despite warnings from the United States, began an unprovoked, unjustified, and brutal attack on civilians in and around Irbil in northern Iraq, and the United States responded to Hussein's aggression on September 3, 1996 by destroying some Iraqi air defense installations and announcing an expansion of the southern no-fly zone.

Those favoring the resolution contended:

We are thankful that Senate leaders have been able to negotiate compromise language that expresses support for our Armed Forces. Foreign aggressors need to know that when the United States' Armed Forces are in combat, political differences are put aside in support of those troops. For this resolution, some Senators wish that the statement in favor of the troops had gone further to endorse specific decisions that have been made; other Senators would have preferred that the reference to the Commander in Chief had not been made, because of the possible inference that one might then make that because the resolution endorses the military leadership of the President as Commander in Chief, one then also endorses the policy justifications behind this use of force (which are unclear). We will reserve judgment on the efficacy of these strikes, and the advisability of the President's subsequent policies in the region, until we have briefings and testimony from Administration officials on the operation. Many of us believe that the need for military action was apparent, but we do not yet know whether the action ordered by the President was the appropriate response. We need to know the Administration's overall strategy for reducing instability and countering threats to our security interests in the region. The Administration should explain what precise purposes these strikes were intended to serve. Were they intended to compel

(See other side)

YEAS (96)				NAYS (1)		NOT VOTING (3)	
Republican (50 or 98%)		Democrats (46 or 100%)		Republicans (1 or 2%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (1)
Abraham	Hutchison	Akaka	Johnston	Gorton		Hatfield- ^{2AN}	Inouye- ²
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Baucus	Kennedy			Murkowski- ²	
Bennett	Jeffords	Biden	Kerrey				
Bond	Kassebaum	Bingaman	Kerry				
Brown	Kempthorne	Boxer	Kohl				
Burns	Kyl	Bradley	Lautenberg				
Campbell	Lott	Breaux	Leahy				
Chafee	Lugar	Bryan	Levin				
Coats	Mack	Bumpers	Lieberman				
Cochran	McCain	Byrd	Mikulski				
Cohen	McConnell	Conrad	Moseley-Braun				
Coverdell	Nickles	Daschle	Moynihan				
Craig	Pressler	Dodd	Murray				
D'Amato	Roth	Dorgan	Nunn				
DeWine	Santorum	Exon	Pell				
Domenici	Shelby	Feingold	Pryor				
Faircloth	Simpson	Feinstein	Reid				
Frahm	Smith	Ford	Robb				
Frist	Snowe	Glenn	Rockefeller				
Gramm	Specter	Graham	Sarbanes				
Grams	Stevens	Harkin	Simon				
Grassley	Thomas	Heflin	Wellstone				
Gregg	Thompson	Hollings	Wyden				
Hatch	Thurmond						
Helms	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

Iraq's withdrawal from the Kurdish city of Irbil in the north of Iraq and to cease all aggression against Kurds? Were they intended to persuade Hussein against contemplating renewed aggression against his neighbors to the south? Were they intended to foment opposition to Hussein within the Iraqi military? Was the limited dimension of this operation dictated by the opposition of our allies in the region or did it represent some other consideration which has yet to be disclosed? Should Hussein test American resolve further by continuing hostilities in the north, launching new operations against the Shiite minority in the south, flaunting the new no-fly restrictions, firing missiles at U.S. and allied warplanes, or again threatening the territorial integrity of U.S. allies in the region, is the Administration prepared to take significantly greater military actions? Will it try to rebuild the coalition of Desert Storm allies, and have those allies given any demonstration to the Clinton Administration that they would be willing to join it in a coalition? Will we be able to use bases in Turkey and Saudi Arabia? Most importantly, what are the geopolitical circumstances that the Administration wishes to obtain in the Gulf, and what is its overall, coherent strategy for achieving them? Until these questions are answered, we have no way of judging the efficacy or the advisability of the missile strikes against Iraq. As we said at the outset, though, we support our troops, and we respect the authority of the President as Commander in Chief, so we are pleased to have the opportunity to vote in favor of this resolution.

No arguments were expressed in opposition to the resolution.